

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as set forth below:

1-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

initiating a first process on a computer, wherein the first process is separate from a first application that comprises one or more second processes;

assigning a unique virtual Internet Protocol (IP) address and virtual hostname to the first application on the computer;

the first process registering the virtual IP address and the virtual hostname with a software module on the computer, wherein the software module is interposed between the first application and an operating system on the computer, the first application executing on the operating system on the computer during use and the software module executing on the operating system on the computer during use;

the first process initiating at least one of the one or more second processes on the computer ~~of the first application on the computer~~; and

the at least one second process inheriting the virtual IP address and the virtual hostname from the first process.

26. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 further comprising the first process using a first application identifier in the registering, and the inheriting comprising receiving the first application identifier from the first process.

27. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 further comprising:

the first application issuing a hostname request; and

the software module responding to the hostname request with the virtual  
hostname.

28. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 further comprising resolving the virtual hostname to the virtual IP address.

29. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 28 further comprising using the virtual IP address as a local address.

30. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 28 further comprising configuring one or more address resolution mechanisms to resolve the virtual hostname to the virtual IP address.

31. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 30 wherein the resolving is performed responsive to a request from a second application.

32. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 31 wherein the one or more address resolution mechanisms comprise a domain name service.

33. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 30 wherein the one or more address resolution mechanisms comprise a file maintained by the operating system.

34. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 wherein the assigning is dynamic.

35. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 wherein the assigning is static.

36. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25 further comprising establishing a virtual interface having the virtual IP address and virtual hostname.

37. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 36 further comprising associating the virtual IP address with a physical IP address ~~if~~ of the computer on which the first application is executing.

38. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 36 further comprising associating the virtual IP address with a loopback address in the computer on which the first application is executing.

39. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium storing a plurality of instructions which, when executed as a first process on a computer:

register a unique virtual IP address and a virtual hostname assigned to a first application on the computer with a software module interposed between the first application and an operating system on the computer, wherein the software module is executed on the operating system on the computer during use; and

initiate at least one of one or more second processes on the computer, wherein the ~~of the first application comprises the one or more second processes on the operating system on the computer~~, wherein the at least one second process inherits the virtual IP address and the virtual hostname from the first process on the computer.

40. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in claim 39 wherein the first process uses a first application identifier in registering the virtual IP address and the virtual hostname, and the inheriting comprises receiving the first application identifier from the first process.

41. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in claim 39 further storing a second plurality of instructions comprising the software module, wherein the second plurality of instructions, when executed on the computer:

receive a hostname request issued by the first application; and

respond to the hostname request with the virtual hostname.

42. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in claim 39 further storing a second plurality of instructions which, when executed on the computer, establish a virtual interface having the virtual IP address and virtual hostname.

43. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in claim 42 wherein the second plurality of instructions, when executed, associate the virtual IP address with a physical IP address of a computer on which the first application is executing.

44. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in claim 42 wherein the second plurality of instructions, when executed, associate the virtual IP address with a loopback address in a computer on which the first application is executing.

45. (Previously Presented) A computer system comprising:

hardware configured to execute instructions; and

the computer readable medium as recited in claim 39 coupled to the hardware.